

REMARKS

The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

I. Status of the claims

Claims 1-3, 9, 15-16 and 24-26 are requested to be canceled without disclaimer or prejudice thereof.

Claims 4, 10-12, 14, 17-20 and 23 are currently being amended. Claims 10-11, 17, 20 and 23 are amended to depend from pending versus canceled claims. Claims 4, 12 and 14 are amended to recite elements of canceled claims. Exemplary support for the claim amendment is shown in the table below.

Amended claim	Exemplary Support
4	Canceled claim 9
12	Canceled claim 4, original claim 12
14	Canceled claim 4, original claim 14, canceled claims 15 and 16

The amendments add no new matter, and entry and examination thereof is respectfully requested.

The Applicants acknowledge that these amendments are made after a final office action on the merits. However, because the amendments place the claims in condition for allowance or at least in better condition for appeal, entry and examination thereof is respectfully requested. This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 4-8, 10-14 and 17-23 are now pending in this application.

II. Claim rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 4-8, 14-15 and 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,618,261 (hereinafter Nevvyas).

The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, without conceding to the correctness of the Office Action assertions and solely to expedite prosecution, claims 15, and 24-26 have been canceled, thereby obviating the rejection with respect to these claims.

Independent claim 4 (and thereby dependent claims 5-8) has been amended to incorporate the limitations of allowed claims 9, and claim 14 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of allowed claim 16 and canceled claim 15, as suggested in the Office Action at page 2 and described below in section III.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is respectfully requested.

III. Allowed subject matter

The Office Action stated that claims 9-13, 16-20 and 21-23 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claims. The Applicants have so amended the claims. As described above, claim 4 now includes the limitations of claim 9, and claims 5-8 and 10-11 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 4. Claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 4, and claim 13 depends from claim 12. Claim 14 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claims 4, 15 and 16, and claims 17-23 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 14.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

The present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by the credit card payment instructions in EFS-Web being incorrect or absent, resulting in a rejected or incorrect credit card transaction, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, the Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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